72

An abſtract of the grieuances of the Maiſter, VVardens and Commonaltie of the Cutlers, Paynter-ſtainers, and Book-binders of the Cittie of London, and conſequently of all England concerning the Pattent or Charter of ſole making of Gold and Siluer *Foliat* and the Proclamation prohibiting the *importation of any into this Kingdome, conteyned likewiſe in briefe in a Petition exhibited into the Commons houſe of Parliament.* viz.

THat Gold and Siluer *Foliat* hath for the moſt part beene heretofore imported into this kingdome from the part beyond the Seas, and ſo free for all men to buy the ſame where they pleaſed.

About September 1619. certaine perſons skilled in the miſtery of Gold beating, being in all vnder thirtie in number, and all or moſt of them incorporated into ſome, of the Companies of the Citty of London, combyning and confederating themſelues together, did for their owne priuat lucre and gaine by the meanes and furtherance of one Doctor *Egleſham* one of his Maieſties Phiſitians and Sir *Henry Bretton* Knight. obtained from the Kings Maieſtie a Charter for a Corporation vnto themſelues, for the ſole making of Gold and Siluer *Foliat*, and a Proclamation Prohibiting the importation of any into this kingdome.

And moreouer, that the ſaid Company of Goldbeaters for procuring the ſaid Charter or Corporation, did promiſe and couenant to pay and allow out of their ſaid Corporation vnto the ſaid Doctor *Egleſham* 200 lib. *per annum*, during life, and to Sir *Henry Bretton* 50 lib. *per annum* beſides other yearlie charges amounting vnto in all 300 lib. *per annum*. or there a bouts.

The grieuances therefore ariſing thereby doe ſubſiſt of theſe particulars following.

First that by this meanes, the Petitioners haue euer ſince beene inforced to buy, and take the ſaid *Foliat* of the new erected Corporation of Goldbeaters and no where elſe.

That they are inforced to giue higher rates and prices then heretofore they were wont to pay, viz they now exact and make your Suppliants the Cutlers pay 15 s. for ſo much Gold *Foliat* which before the erecting of the ſaid Corporation they paid but 12 s. and 30 s. for ſo much Siluer *Foliat* that they did vſually buy for 20 s. & for your ſuppliants the Painters they make them pay 21 s. for their Gold *Foliat*, for the which before they did pay but 18 s. and yet the ſize leſſer, and 11 s. for the Siluer *Foliat*, the which they bought for 7 s. 6 d. and your Suppliants the Booke Binders pay 9 s, for ſo much Gold *Foliat* as heretofore they did vſuallie buy for 8 s.

That there are but ſix of the ſaid Gold beaters which they call Wardens, which haue all ſet gaines thereof, and they confine the ſaile of the ſaid *Foliat* to one place which they call their Hall, whither they tie all the reſt of the ſaid Goldbeaters to bring their *Foliat*, and conſtreynes the petitioners to come and buy, yea they haue ſo combyned and confederated themſelues together, that they haue cauſed them ſelues to be bound to each other by obligations in great ſummes of money, not to vent or ſell any to your Suppliants at lower rates. And moreouer haue cauſed the reſt of them being the ſaid *Foliat* makers, to take ſeuerall corporall oathes, not to ſell any elſe where or to any of your Suppliants.

That ſinnce the obteyning of the ſaid Corporation and proclamation, they made the ſame more thinner and deceiptfuller then the ſame was made before, ſo as the ſame doth ſooner decay and fade in wearing, to the great diſcredit of your Suppliants, the workemen that vſe the ſame. And a damage and diſpleaſing to the Kings Maieſtie, the Nobilitie and Gentrie, which needeth or ſhall need the vſe of guilding for adorning of their howſes, Armes, Bookes, and other things.

Whereas one *Spencer* a Goldbeater a poore man vſing his trade in ſecret places for feare of them for the getting of his liuing, The ſaid Goldbeaters did chaſe him from place to place, and at laſt came forceably vpon him, tooke away his tooles, cauſed him to be arreſted and caſt in priſon and there laid 4000 lib. Action vppon him, and when as they did perceiue ſome of your Suppliants to endeauorr to releue him and helpe him out of Priſon, The ſaid company of Goldbeaters together with one *Norton* the Clarke of their Hall did exhibit a long bill of 46 ſheets of paper into his Maieſties Court of Star-chamber in the late Atturnney generall his name for moleſtation ſake onely againſt ſome of your Suppliants and their wiues, and put them to almoſt 20 lib. coſts to anſwere the ſame, and withall gaue out ſpeeches that they would vndoe your Suppliants.

The ſaid Goldbeaters doe ſpend and conſume of the proper Coynes or Bullion of this kingdome, in makeing of the ſaid *Foliat* 3 or 4 thouſand lib *per annum*. by eſtimation to the preiudice of the Commó wealth in diminiſhing ſo much of his Bullion which would be turned into Coyne.

That if the ſaid Charter and Proclammation were remoued and taken away, there wouldbe ſufficient quantities of Gold and Siluer *Foliat* imported into this Realme, from forraine parts for commodities ſent from hence, to ſerue all his Maieſtie Dominions for all kind of vſes, for ornaments, without diminiſhing any the Coynes or Bullions of this Realme whatſoeuer, ſo as the Common wealth ſhall not be in this kind damnified, nor the trade of ſo many thouſands of poore artificers of this kingdome that doe get their liuings thereby impaired.

Whereas the Goldbeaters doe alledg that the *Foliat* heretofore imported out of the Low Countries was baſe Gold, and made deceiptfully. Your Suppliaunts which haue vſed the ſame will maintaine and aver, that the ſame was as good as any they make now a dayes, and farre better cheape.

Whereas your Suppliants haue complained vnto them for ſelling their ſaid ſtuffe at ſuch deere rates, and for making the ſame ſo thinne, they haue anſwered that your Suppliaunts, were better be content, for if they did finde fault therewith, they ſhould pay more for the ſame.

Whereas the ſaid Goldbeaters did complaine for want of meanes to liue vppon, by their ſaid trade, before the obtaining of the ſaid Patent it is certainly knowne that they do now allow and pay out of their ſaid Corporation 300 lib. or vpwards *per annum*, to the ſaid Doctor *Egleſham*, Sir *Henry Bretton*, the Clarke, and Beadle of their Hall, and otherwiſe, all which is meerely exacted and raiſed out of the prices, & by the falſities of the ſaid ſtuffe, to the great damage of your Suppliants, and his Maieſties ſubiects. And yet by reaſon thereof the ſaid workemens maintenance never a whit bettered.

And laſtlie the ſaid Charter or Corporation is in the nature of a Monopolie, and is obnoxious to the Common wealth, in conſuming his Coyne and Bullion and enhauncing the price of the ſaid *Foliat* as aforeſaid, and doe tend to the vndoing or hurt of many thouſand of the poore Artificers in this land, of Cutlers, Painters Stainers, and Booke-binders, and to all others vſing this art of gilding, and is beneficiall to none, but to the ſaid Doctor *Egleſham*, Sir *Henry Breton*, the ſixe VVardens of the Goldbeaters and the ſaid *Norton* their Clarke for any thing your petitioners know, perceiue or can diſcerne.

Wherefore they humbly pray the ſame may be called in and diſſolued.

Broadsides
23.113